

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 00496 221455Z

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1439

INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 496

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF FULLY ARMORED VEHICLE TO BUENOS AIRES

REF/ STATE 10566

1. BOTH EMBASSY AND CONGEN CONCUR THAT PRIORITIES REGARDING WORLD-WIDE ASSIGNMENT OF FULLY ARMORED VEHICLES CAN BEST BE DETERMINED BY DEPARTMENT. IF FINAL DETERMINATION IS MADE THAT FULLY ARMORED VEHICLE SHOULD BE TEMPORARILY TRANSFERRED TO BUENOS AIRES, EMBASSY PREPARED TO TRANSFER SEMI-ARMORED VEHICLE FROM BRASILIA TO RIO IMMEDIATELY.

2. FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE CONSULATE GENERAL, HOWEVER, PROPOSAL OUTLINED REFTEL HAS TROUBLESOME IMPLICATIONS WHICH WE HOPE WILL BE WEIGHED CAREFULLY IN DECIDING WHETHER TO REMOVE VEHICLE FROM RIO. FOLLOWING SIX PARAGRAPHS (PARAS 3-8) WERE DRAFTED IN RIO FOR INCLUSION IN REPLY TO REFTEL.

3. RIO SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, FOR CONSUL GENERAL AND FOR VISITING DIGNITARIES, NOW ARE BASED LARGELY ON USE OF FULLY ARMORED VEHICLE. FOLLOW CAR RECENTLY WAS DISCONTINUED IN ORDER IMPLEMENT ECONOMY MEASURES CUTTING LOCAL DRIVER STAFF AND REDUCING POLICE DETAIL DEMANDS ON STATE OF GUANABARA. IF WE ARE NOW TO RESUME USE OF FOLLOW CAR, IN LINE WITH EXISTING PRACTICE IN BRASILIA AND SAO PAULO, WE WILL BE REVERSING THESE ECONOMIES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BRASIL 00496 221455Z

AND MAY RUN INTO ROAD BLOCKS IN GETTING BACK THE POLICE

DETAIL.

4. REFTEL PROPOSAL IF IMPLEMENTED WOULD LEAVE US CONGEN WITH LESSER SECURITY THAN THAT PROVIDED TO OTHER POTENTIAL TARGETS HERE, WITH INFERENCE THAT US BEING EASIEST TARGET MAY BECOME THE MOST ATTRACTIVE ONE. GERMAN GOVERNMENT, AFTER SURVEYING SECURITY SITUATION IN RIO, RECENTLY PROVIDED FULLY ARMORED CAR TO ITS CONGEN HERE, AND BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING SIMILAR VEHICLE ABOUT TO ARRIVE. ADDITIONALLY THESE COUNTRIES STILL USE FOLLOW CAR ALTHOUGH THIS MAY BE DISCONTINUED SOON, FOLLOWING OUR EXAMPLE, BECAUSE FOLLOW CARS IN RIO HEAVY TRAFFIC HAVE ONLY MARGINAL SECURITY EFFECTIVENESS.

5. WITH INCREASED NEED FOR VEHICLES IN RIO, FOLLOWING RESTORATION FOLLOW CAR, WE WILL HAVE PROBLEMS REDUCING OUR REGULAR RIO FLEET IN ORDER PROVIDE BRASILIA WITH A CAR IN EXCHANGE FOR RETURN TO RIO OF SEMI-ARMORED FOLLOW CAR.

6. ONLY OTHER SECURITY MANNED VEHICLE IN OPERATION, A NEIGHBORHOOD SWEEP CAR, ALSO HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR TERMINATION IN NEAR FUTURE. WE ARE DELAYING THIS, PENDING DECISION ON REFTEL, BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE NEED TO RETAIN PERSONNEL AND VEHICLE.

7. NET IMPACT OF REFTEL PROPOSAL WOULD LEAVE RIO WITH SECURITY CAPABILITY OF VERY MINOR CHARACTER, WITH HIGHER EXPENSES FOR DRIVERS, OVERTIME, AND POLICE, AND WITH INADEQUATE PROTECTION CAPABILITY FOR VISITING DIGNITARIES WHO WE ANTICIPATE WILL CONTINUE THEIR FREQUENT VISITS TO RIO AND SAO PAULO.

8. CURRENT CONDITION-MAINTENANCE REPORT ON OUR FULLY ARMORED VEHICLE IS FAIR TO GOOD, REQUIRING HOWEVER IMMEDIATE ENGINE GASKET AND VALVE REPLACEMENT UPON ARRIVAL HERE OF PARTS ALREADY ORDERED. ESTIMATED USEFUL LIFE OF CAR BEFORE COMPLETE OVERHAUL IS TWELVE (12) MONTHS.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BRASIL 00496 221455Z

9. CHARGE AND REGIONAL SECURITY OFFICER AT BRASILIA CONCUR THAT FULLY ARMORED CAR PROVIDES MORE EFFECTIVE SECURITY AND IS BETTER SUITED TO RIO TRAFFIC SITUATION THAN A SEMI-ARMORED PRINCIPAL OFFICER'S VEHICLE WITH FOLLOW CAR. IN THEIR OPINION, HOWEVER, MECHANISM EXISTS AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE THROUGH REVISION OF DUTIES OF SECURITY MANNED VEHICLE MENTIONED

IN PARAGRAPH 6 FOR ADEQUATE SECURITY PROTECTION OF CONSUL
GENERAL UNTIL A NEW FULLY ARMORED VEHICLE CAN BE
PROVIDED TO THE CHIEF OF MISSION IN ARGENTINA AND THE
FULLY ARMORED VEHICLE RETURNED TO RIO.
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